The present doctoral research project is an attempt to explore an important aspect of contemporary fiction: the representation of history. By focusing on the partition event in RahiMasoom Reza's *AdhaGaon*(1966), BhishamSahni's*Tamas*(1976), IntizarHussain's*Basti*(1979), BapsiSidhwa's*Cracking India*(1991),MukulKesavan's*Looking Through Glass*(1995) and Shiv K. Kumar's *A River With Three Banks:Agony and Ecstasy*(1998), the study shows that the novels selected for the study can be read as alternative versions of history.These novels can be viewed as double voiced discourses where dominant voices of history are refracted through subversion and provide space to other voices that have been suppressed. The texts are analyzed with respect to their use of different voices through the novelists' emphasis on how history is a human construct and how they highlight the silenced histories of the marginalized groups. I argue that it is in these works of fiction that much of the suppressed history of marginalized people has been recorded; untold stories are told from the experiences of those who were involved in events, rather than from the objective perspective conjectured by the historian.

The hypothesis of this research project is that novels also offer crucial insights in understanding historyand it is assumed that a literary text is coterminous with history, and it is intertextual.An analysis of these literary texts allows a scope for re-thinking and re-reading different versions of history.In documenting the evidences in this thesis, I have followedthe MLA style sheet of the seventh edition, 2009.

To support my analysis Ihave referred to the views of scholars who have worked on the partition such as RanjitGuha, Pandey, Jill Didur, ParthChatterjee, MushirulHasan, Veena Das, RituMenon, KamlaBhasin, Joe Cleary and others to argue how these novels destabilize the hegemony of mainstream and official narratives of the catastrophic event of the partition.The study is divided into six chapters.

Chapter I.Introduction: Representation of the partition, history and the Novel

This chapter serves as an introduction to the question of representation of the partition event.Literature is an important source of history as accounts of creative writings are testimonies of the marginal voices and memories. Among the various literary forms, the connection of the novel with history has been the closest. However, there has been constant evolution in the nature and scope of the novelist's engagement with history and vice versa too. The novel established its base by imitating history: it progressed by making massive use of history, incorporating within the fictional frame a large number of social, political and

cultural events and happenings and in recent phase it has also interrogated and problematized the discourse of history.The analysis gets support from postmodernist and postcolonial views regarding history and its insertion in fiction. The postmodernist view of history argues against conventional history writing and its claims to present history truthfully.This traditional view of history is opposed by later historians like Hayden White by arguing that historical facts cannot be represented objectively because they cannot exist independently of the historian. Historical events can only be reached through documents and other texts, and historiography turns historical events into historical facts. The postmodern philosophy of history, based on poststructuralist theories,claims the textuality of reality. Poststructuralist view makes it clear that history is a text; a discourse which consists of representations.Poststructuralist influence opens the way to a historicist study of literary texts, analyzing literature in the context of social, political and cultural history, and regarding literary history as a part of a larger cultural history. Post modern philosophy of history liberates history from the influence of the dominant totalitarian and patriarchal ideologies and gives voices to multiple versions.Official history is believed to be the history of the dominant power which suppresses the history of minority people. The postmodern fiction attempts to give voice to the history of the suppressed. Now history is self modifying instead of being objective and static as it was considered earlier. History no more is a monolithic collection of facts and their hegemonic interpretations. It can be viewed in multiple ways: political, economic, social, religious and feminist. The postmodernist view of history rejects the idea of history as a directly approachable, unitary past and substitutes for it the conception of multiple histories.

Postcolonial rewriting of history also attempts to create alternative histories of the colonized as opposed to the official history of the colonizer. Postcolonial theorists believe that traditional history is used by the colonial powers as an instrument to construct reality on behalf of the colonizer; and such history inevitably leaves out the histories of the colonized. Postcolonial novels that include references to the colonizers' version of historical facts with a critical distance try to contest the hegemonic accounts of the past by introducing the suppressed voices of the marginalized whose histories are silenced under the dominance of colonizer's history.

In this context this research work attempts to analyze the partition event from multiple perspectives focusing on the issues such as home, nation, identity, belonging, politics, gendered violence and agony of marginalized people.

Partition of Indian subcontinent is one of the most horrifying and catastrophic events in the recent history of India. It is an event that even after so many years arouses multi-faceted

responses, where as much is buried as is revealed. Independence for India in 1947 came with a price: division on the basis of religion. In the communal riots that followed, hundreds of thousands were killed and millions rendered homeless. This is an event that cracked the dream of *Akhand Bharat* forever. A political decision, taken at the level of high politics, changed the identity of those who nowhere were responsible for any decision. The irreparable damage and the unprecedented scale of violence and dislocation of people, their tortures and insecure journeys across newly created borders and disruption of family and community lives has made the partition the most tragic event in living memory. Apart from the indelible impression that partition has left on the minds and hearts of people, it has also led to social and political processes that continue to affect the lives of people even today. However,the representation of the everydayand local experiences had been pushed to the margin and much historical scholarship deals with the high politicsof India's partition. Dominant historiography of the partition event has remained for the most part concerned with nationalist interests, and has focused chiefly on origins and causes of the Partition; debates among the leaders and decision makers; main national leaders like Nehru, Gandhi, Jinnah etc. and about their roles and contribution in bringing about freedom, their arguments and disagreements, main political parties such as the Muslim League and the Congress, the intervention of British in effecting the division of the country and the subsequent transfer of power to the Government of India and Pakistan. Such historical scholarships--whether it be official records, documents, private papers or political historical resources--have been unable to measure the personal and social histories of the people who really were churned into the whirlpool of violence of 1947.Preoccupied with statistical analysis, data and the bare truth, the historiography imposes a methodology to produce a narrative that does not match people's real life experiences. To excavate and recover the histories and real experiences of people and suppressed human suffering, writers have emphasized the centrality of personal narratives, testimonies, eyewitness accounts, the role of memory and literary narratives. Fiction has provided an intense window on the personal experiences of 1947, dramatizing graphically the impact of the partition on everyday lives. Recent years have witnessed the publication of a number of anthologies of the partition stories, and historians have begun to make increasing reference to this.Fiction has proved a far more powerful vehicle for describing the influence of the partition on the common men and women. As pointed rightly by M. Asaduddin:"Fiction also provides us with competing versions of truth, multiple points of view and thus leads us to richer and more nuanced understanding of events and people."

Chapter II.Home, Nation and Politics: *AdhaGaon, Tamas*

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part of this chapter explores the foray of the national/ urban politics into the rural life in the 1940's and analyzes how religion and nationalism interrupted and rearranged the village life in northern India especially Eastern U.P. during Partition days. The novel *AdhaGaon* may be taken as what ArjunAppadurai call a "local reading of a macro-event." By envisioning a coexistence of the two communities as a reservoir of potentialities that can be adopted as an alternative mode of being outside the sectarian and exclusionist framework imposed by the partition, Reza challenges and interrupts the grand narrative of nationalism on the basis of religion.

The Muslims in India suffered the most from the partition in every respect. The novel mirrors the Muslim politics of the period when even secular minded Muslims were pushed into an orthodox theocracy and, similarly, the Hindus moved towards a militant Hinduism. The novel presents a true picture of the life of the Shia Muslims in the context of the Partition of the country in 1947. In the pre partition days, Muslims of North India extended whole hearted support to the Muslim League and Pakistan Movement without realizing that if and when Pakistan were formed, they would still be living in India. The creation of Pakistan created a new situation. Politically it squeezed the nationalist Muslims who had opposed the creation of Pakistan and now were abused by both the parties. They were being sidelined and treated as outsiders or tested to pay the price for their loyalty or were viewed with suspicion. The partition, instead of settling disputes between Hindu-Muslims communities widened the gap between them.

Though apparently it is the story of the Shia-Sunni relationship in a village, it deals with the larger question of the formation of Pakistan. It is set in an area where the argument of the Muslim League that the Muslims could never feel at ease in a Hindu India was being most strongly debated. However, there is hardly any description of destructive religious tensions even after the Pakistan demand was voiced and conceded. The reason for this lies not only in the novel's aesthetics of reticence, but also in its argument that India is as much a land of the Muslims as of all the others who live there. It is not that the terror of the 1947 is ignored. Instead, what is confidently asserted as a truth is that for the Shia 'Zamindars' and the Muslim poor, the raquis, the chamars,thenais,theahirs,therajputs and the scavengers, the lifetime in Ganguali was so common and ordinary that each of them accepted the village as their natural, temporal and sacred home.

AdhaGaon forcefully rejects the imposed notionof home and nation and strongly argues that individual identity is deeply rooted in the land of one's birth and it has ancestral

value; juxtaposing it with the forging of new national identities that is established with two nation theory. To interrogate the tensions and negotiations which come with the demand for Pakistan and to map the external, national influences on the lives of villagers, the chapter analyzes the text *AdhaGaon* by exploring the love of its residents for their land.Gangauli,though far away from the high politics of the elites, grapples with the impinging national politics and the imposed Partition reshapes the identities of Gangaulians.

The second part of this chapter focuses on the close analysis of BhishamSahni's*Tamas* (1974), set in the years just before the partition. Unlike dominant historiography, the texts like *Tamas* expose the silenced histories of common folk and help in retrieving alternative histories of the partition.BhishamSahni who saw partition as the articulation of a painful historical moment, represents memories of a history that speaks of those whose stories remain outside the periphery of official historical discourse and strongly questions the precepts of official narratives. Sahni juxtaposes ordinary people from different religious groups with political leaders to show the ways in which the leaders schemed against the people for their own party interests. Sahni's message is that, had the people understood the schemes of the rulers, both British and the Indian elites, they would have never encouraged or participated in the communal violence that followed Partition. The novel though written in 1974 is relevant even today for what it says is still a part of our contemporary history. Religion still is an important pawn in the game of politics in which weaker section still is used and tempted as a tool to win the game.The stories represented in the novels like *Tamas* contribute to the recovery of human suffering, the silenced voices, recalling and representing significant moments as they were experienced and witnessed by ordinary, common men and women. The novel is a recordation of an unbiased portrayal of fanaticism, and crippling effects of the partition on individuals. It attempts to expose the ignorance and darkness involved in communal violence on the eve of the partition. It points out how communal violence was provoked by fundamentalists in the three communities and how innocent persons were duped into serving the ulterior purposes of the communalists, who infused tension and hatred for their own ends at the cost of communal harmony. The novel while answering the question of eruption of the communal violence makes it clear that the root cause of the communal violence is political. Communal violence is used by a few individuals to climb the ladders of political importance. This is shown in the novel through the character of Murad Ali. The common people fall prey to his designs without realizing anything.*Tamas*is a grim reminder of the immense tragedy that results whenever the religious

sentiments of communities are manipulated to achieve political objectives. It serves as a warning against the use of religion as a weapon to gain and perpetuate political power.

In *Tamas*Sahni has provided an insight into the contradictions of human nature, the complexities of a fanatic mind, the subversive nature of communal politics, the terror of religious fundamentalism, the undercurrents of faith and hope in the midst of the most violent of tragedies. The novelist ascertains that apart from the British policy of divide and rule that has brought a rift between Hindus and Muslims, there are also other factors which were responsible for the partition: the intrusion of religion in the politics, the charge against the Congress as the organization of rich Hindus, the irresistible ambitions of the political leaders of both religion, the increasing popularity of Jinnah and his Muslim league and the Muslim apprehension of Hindu dominance were some of the major factors which quickened the partition of India.

Chapters III. The Partition and the 'other': *Basti, Cracking India*

This chapter deals with two important texts of Pakistani writers. It is divided into two segments. The first part deals with the novel *Basti* by IntizarHussain. Partition came with violence, displacement and pain.It involved not only independence but also breaking up of the Indian subcontinent into two independent nations.It included the largest migration of history in which millions of people left their homes and sought refuge in a new land, only because they belonged to a different religion.The novel *Basti*looks beyond the interpretation of the partition as just a political decision, and succeeds in capturing the human side of the historical event—the sense of loss at being uprooted from one's 'home', the hope of a new beginning that accompanies the creation of Pakistan, the feeling of helplessness at the progressive deterioration of the newly created nation as a moral ideal, and the frustration at the fall of dhaka. *Basti* strongly questions in retrospect the religion-based partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947.The novel brings out the loneliness and bewilderment arising out of a displacement that is not only geographical but also psychological. The novel ends with the protagonists poised at the edge of a new world, uncertain of the direction they have to take and casting many a backward glance at the homes that they have been forced to abandon. Cut adrift from their roots, these characters recognize the irrevocable grievous loss they have suffered, and the resolutions of the novel suggest the emergence of a new identity. The further division of Pakistan on the basis of linguistic identity punctures the very idea of nation on the basis of religion.

The other segment investigates the representation of thepartition in *Cracking India* (1988) written by a Pakistani writer BapsiSidhwa, which is based on the writer`s own experiences of the partition. Branded over "an inordinate length of time", as Sidhwa says, "these memories are fragments of the experiences of millions of people traumatized by the partition". The novel focuses on women's personal histories providing an alternative to hegemonic discourses.Sidhwa reveals the silent trauma in written history of India and presents the neutral attitude adopted by the Parsees during partition and also delineates partition with a Pakistani point of view. By depicting everyday experiences of Ayah, Lenny and other characters who belong to the working class, the novel challenges the master narratives of partition.This permits us to take *Cracking India* as another form of historiography—what Pandey terms "little histories" and thereby underlines the limit of the representation of the partition in nationalist historical discourse—and destabilizes it.

ChapterIV.Agony and Identity:*Looking Through Glass* and *A River With Three Banks*

Thischapter deals with MukulKesavan's*Looking Through Glass* and Shiv K. Kumar's *A River With Three Banks.* Both the novels provide critical historiography because they break the conventional historical impulse to arrange events in a developmental sequence. Kesavan, a historian, reviews the period of time between 1942 and 1947. His novel can safely be taken as an account of his reading of the past, while Kumar's novel is an outcome of his real life experiences and memories of the past focusing on life not on time; on experience, not on history.*Looking through Glass* not only reassesses the 1942 movement, it also deconstructs the nationalist projections of the freedom movement in the dominant discourses of Partition.The novel traces the history of nationalist Muslims rendered invisible in history.On the morning of the announcement of the Quit India Program, Muslims all over India who opposed Partition became invisible.Kesavan, though not belonging to minority community, put forward their case quite unequivocally. To him, the decision, however unavoidable, was a breach of faith. The narrator of *Looking ThroughGlass* accumulates multiple versions of history through the people around him: Dadi, Haasan, Ammi, Chaubey, Parwana and Masroor. These voices destabilize received notions of history and contain possibilities of reconstructing a new nation where people are not labeled by their communities, and history is not marked by communal disharmony. People like Ammi and Masroor try to reject the historical act of the Partition. The public chronicles are also put under question by recording the graphic and unverifiable details of individual memories that do not necessarily resemble

the historian's version of the event.The novel suggests that the outward identity markers whether they be of name, language, location, food, politics, kinship and bodily one, like a circumcision, need not bear any correspondence to the reality, indicators can be misleading and identities mistaken: identities can be falsely constructed by society.

A River withThree Banks describes the tragic consequences of the partition. The merciless killing and bloodshed in the wake of the communal violence, the abduction of young girls, rape, the forced prostitution, the loss of faith, the migration of a large number of people from both sides of the border are some of the tragic consequences of the partition. But the novelis different from other novels written on the partition in its note of affirmation. It enthuses the basic spirit of humanism at a pure non-political surface that guides the Hindus, Muslims and British colonialists alike: his characters do not show a resigned acceptance of life; they are rather keen on extracting essence of life even amidst the atmosphere of hatred, violence and communal animosities so that they may transcend into another world of love, tolerance and compassion. By merging the religious identities of the chief protagonists; Gautam and Haseena, the novel suggests that the flow of humanity depends upon trust and mutual understanding and knows no boundaries of caste or culture, religion or nationality.It ends with an appeal for communal harmony and religious tolerance.

ChapterV.Partition: Gendered Violence

This chapter focuses on the sufferings and sacrifices of women during partition as depicted in the selected novels. History of women may not be the same as the history of men.The impact of the partition on women was much different and most traumatic and enduring than men.Women were the worst victims of partition having to endure not only the destruction of their homes, displacement and violence, but also abduction, prostitution, mutilation and rape as they became "a sign through which men communicated with each other" (Das 1995: 56). Atrocities were enacted upon the bodies of women as men of one religious group sought to dishonor the men of another faith by proving them impotent in their inability to protect 'their' women. However, on reading histories of the division of India, one finds that the life-stories of women are often elided. The meta-narrative of the partition of India constructed through government records, transfer of power and constitutional history, although presented within the frame of a secular, liberal democratic nation was in reality fraught with all kinds of gender, religious, caste and class biases. Writers working in the area

of the partition history have begun to deconstruct the seemingly gender-neutral meta-narrative of this history through the use of alternative source materials such as personal testimonies, autobiography and interviews with people who were affected by it. The impulse behind this dismantling of a homogenized partition history is to foreground the pain and suffering of the women. Though the novels *AdhaGaon* and *Basti* don't focus on gendered violence in detail, *Tamas, Cracking India, Looking Through Glass* And *A River With Three Banks* trace the various ways in which women were victimized during partition. These texts show how women's bodies were constructed as a contested ground and as weapons of nationalist politics upon which communal violence was enacted during the partition. The depiction of violence in these novels ranges from physical and sexual to psychological and symbolic. Nationalist narratives of India's partition romanticize women's sacrifice and commemorate violence against women such as rape, abduction and murder as sacrificing acts of women, while these texts allow us to memorialize, mourn and retrieve the history of women.

ChapterVI.Conclusion: Readings of the Partition

This chapter is conclusive in nature. It sums up the findings of the study. After analyzing the partition from multiple angles it can be observed that the partition is a painful chapter in the episode of India's history. When we read the tales told by these novelists, we find not a single but multiple agonized voices which remained suppressed under the weight of dominant historiography. Through an investigation of the silence of the ordinary men and women in these novelswe obtain a chance to re-think and re-read different versions of history.

Along with a comparative study of the selected novels; their commonalities and differences, this chapter attempts to analyze the different modes of narration employed by the selected novelists to draw out the "micro history" embedded within the historical event and depict the unrecorded and fragmented folk experiences.The plight of Tannu and PhunnanMiyaan in *AdhaGaon*, agony of HarnamSignh in *Tamas*, disillusionment of Zakir in *Basti*, pain of Ayah and Hari in *Cracking India*, dilemma of Masroor in *Looking through Glass* and Haseena in *A River with Three Banks* represent the plight of many common men and women entangled in the whirlpool of violence during partition. Further, representation of a traumatic event like the partition has been a difficult exercise for writers to depict. To convey this traumatic event,a range of strategies of representation, including allegory, symbolization, myths, use of irony, motifs of ruins, mourning and devastating time have

been used. If we look at the parts of these titles of the novels like *Adha*, *Cracking*, *Glass*, *A River with three banks* we find that they consist fragmentary images showing split, fragileness or division. The title *Tamas* is also symbolic of darkness. Terror of the times of the division is expressed through darkness.In *AdhaGaon*Moharram becomes the metaphor of mourning over the loss of homeland. Reza even breaks the convention of plot structure by adopting unusual structural device of placing an introduction in the middle of his novel. Hussain adopts a complex literary strategy in *Basti* combining retrospective narration with a story line set in a later phase of history. The novel creates different mode of representation of discontinuity shifting between the late 1960/ early 1970s, 1947,1857 and even during the Hizrat to understand the relevance of traumatic event of the partition.Sidhwa in *Cracking India* conceptualizes partition as a physical breaking of both land and the people.In *A River WithThree Banks,* trope of river is used to depict the flow of humanity and compassion and banks represent three religion: Hindu, Muslim and Christianity. In *Looking Through Glass*Kesavan uses the symbols of railway and camera to connect the cotemporary moment to the period before partition.The trope of photography suggests that one can't merely capture and copy history but one is part of it and alters it in the act of preserving it.

Historiography and literature are complimentary disciplines, since both are engaged in the task of recovering or reconstructing past. However, literature transcends the limitations of history by incorporating and presenting the possible reconstructions of the past along with the probable recreations presented by historiography. Instead of trying to draw generalized conclusions from isolated events and imposing some arbitrary pattern on them, literature records the writer's endeavors to construct reality in fragments by dramatizing some human situation. An act of remembering is always partial and fragmentary. Reality in its totality is unknowable because it is fractured, not seamless. This study is a modest attempt to integrate some of the fragments of history that may lead us to build a comprehensive picture to a certain extent.Examining the partition from a literary perspective provides a keener insight into the personal experiences and national histories.This investigation enables one to see alternative versions of the partition to rethink representation of this key event in the history of India.

Scope for further Study:

The event of the partition of India is too complex and multilayered to be completely theorized. This study integrates some fragments of Partition history. The bulk of literature on Partition is available in regional languages. Even in this research work three novels of the primary sources are translations of the regional texts: *AdhaGaon*, *Tamas* and *Basti*. In a

multilingual country like India, translation and comparative studies become more relevant and effective to explore the regional or local histories of Partition. Therefore this project can further be extended as a comparative study of other Partition novels written in Indian languages.

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